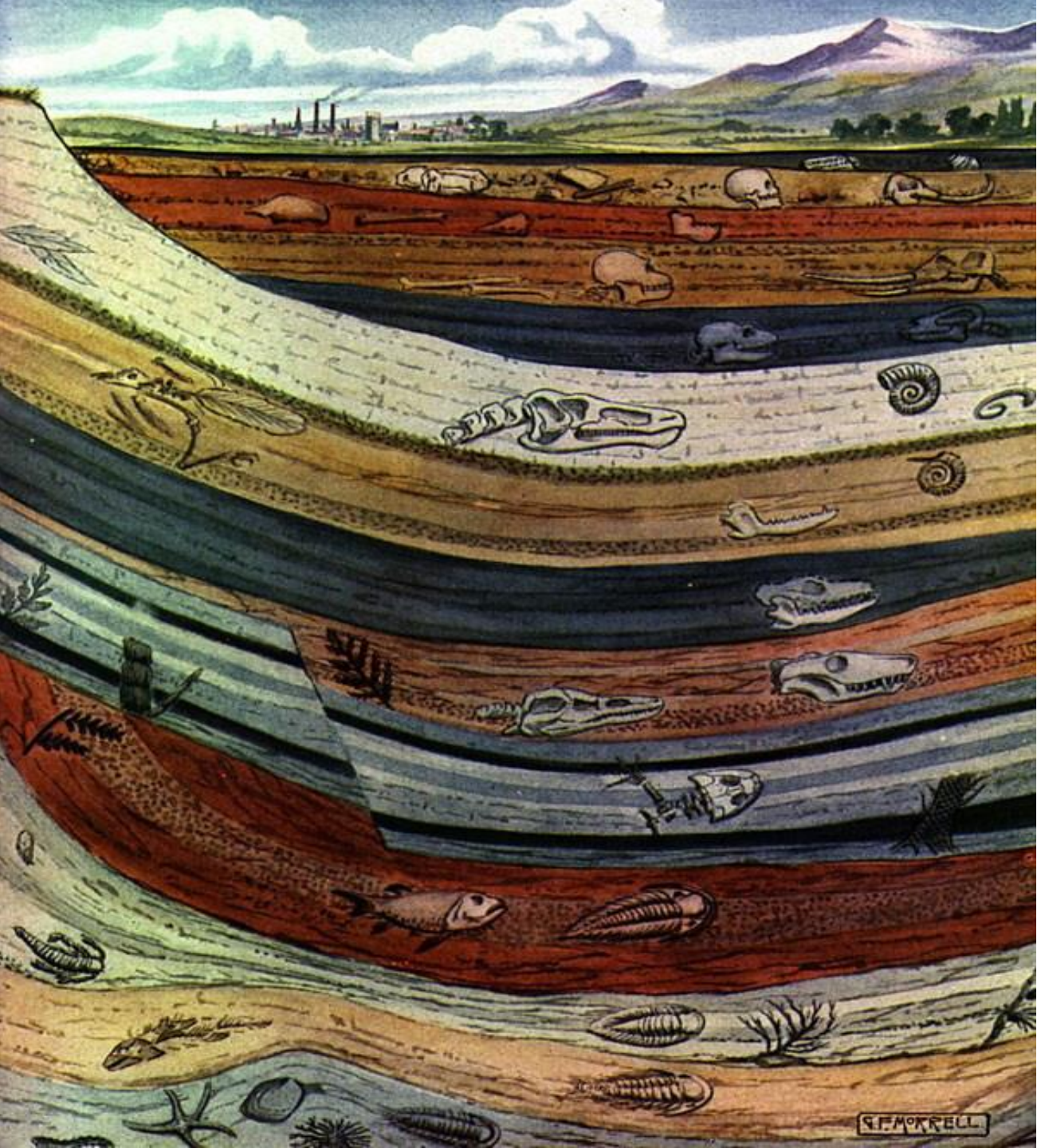
Types of Fossils and How They're Made

By Ms. Bethany

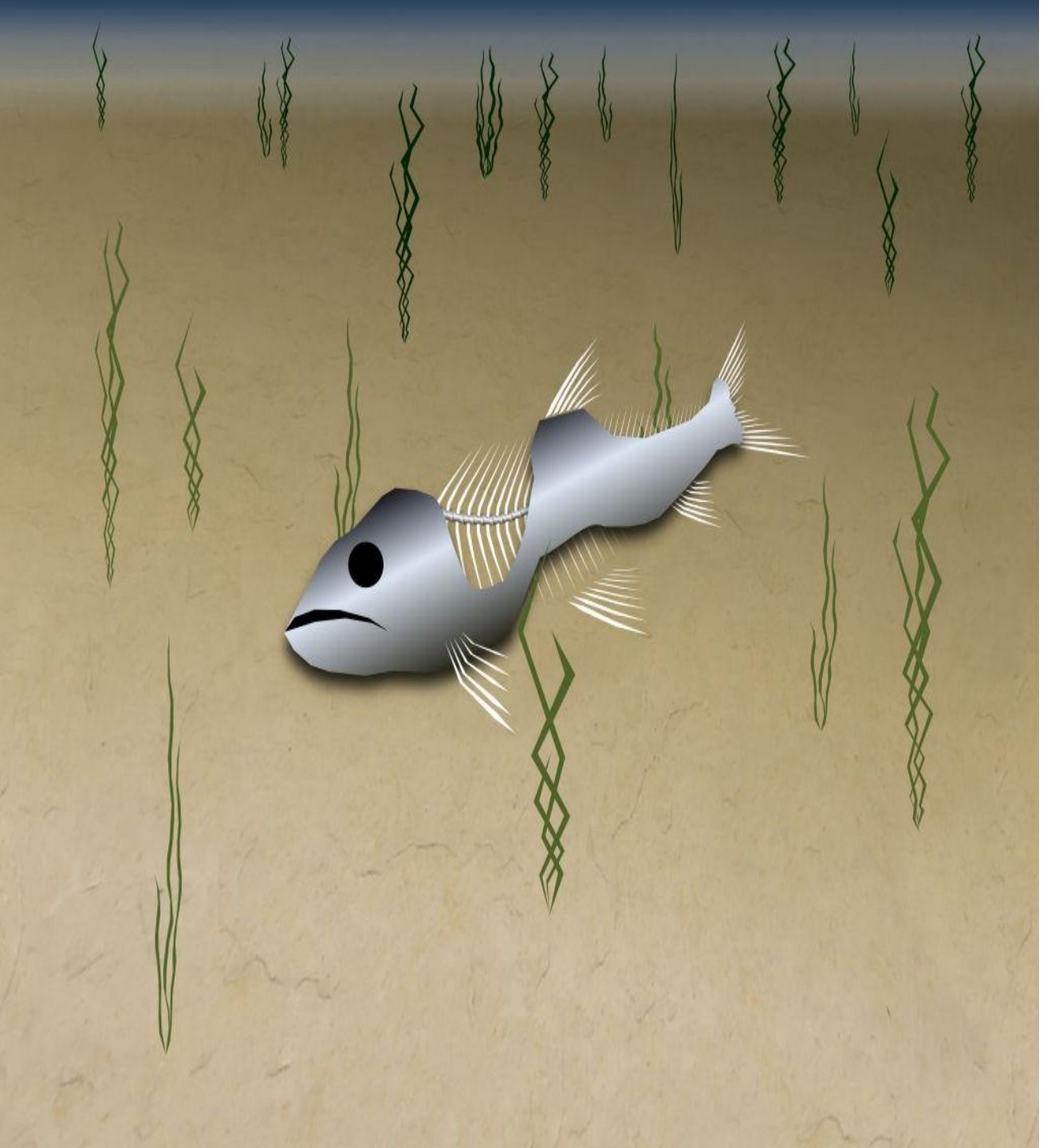


Fossilization

Process during which a plant or animal becomes a fossil.

It is an extremely rare occurrence.

Very few organisms have been preserved as fossils in Earth's existence.



Decomposition

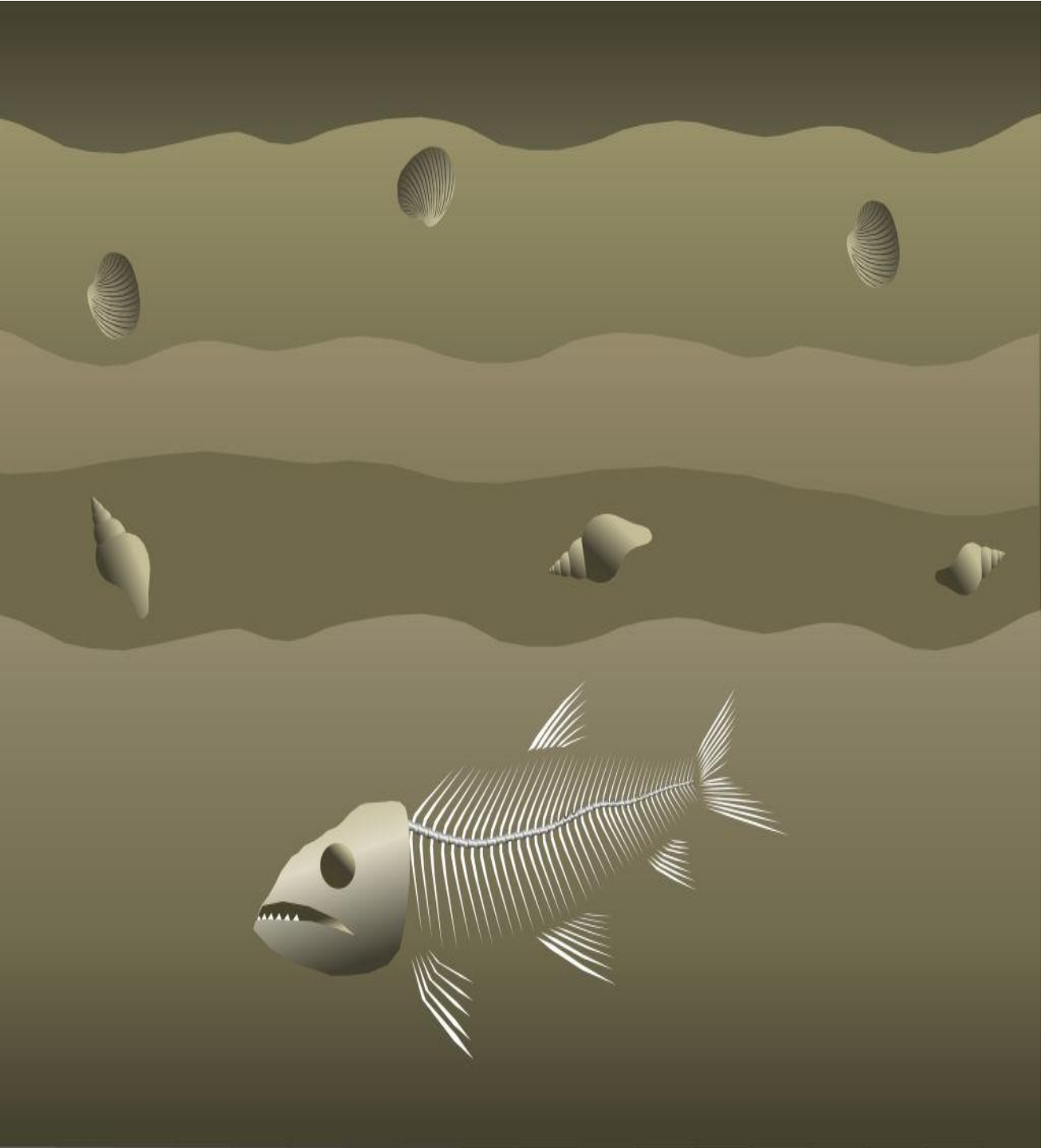
The organic parts of the organism rots and decays, leaving only hard parts like shell, bone, and teeth.

Burial

Nearby sedimentary begins to mobilize and bury the skeleton.

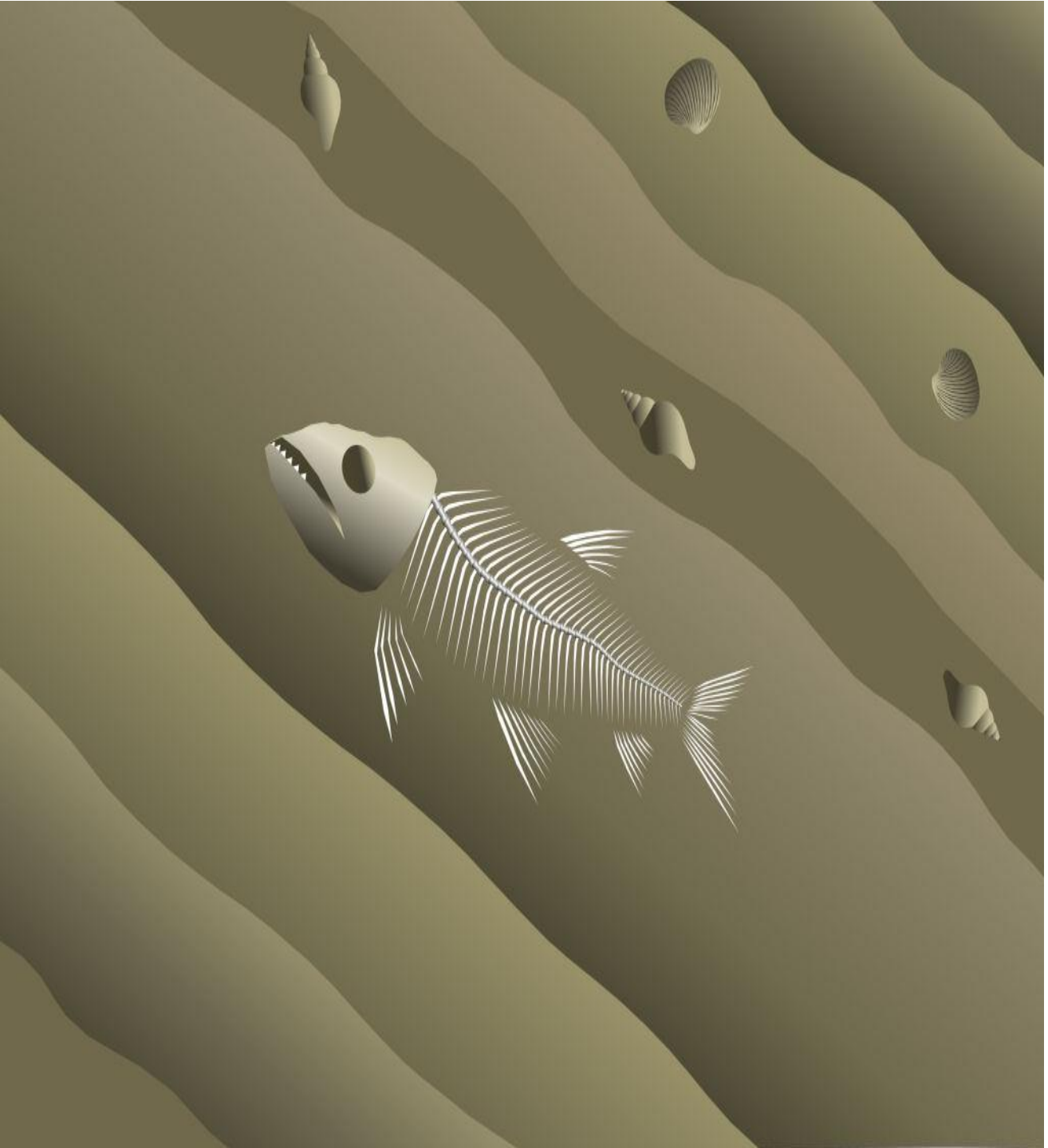
Lithification

The weight of the sediment drives excess water out of the underlying areas, turning soft sediment into hard rock.



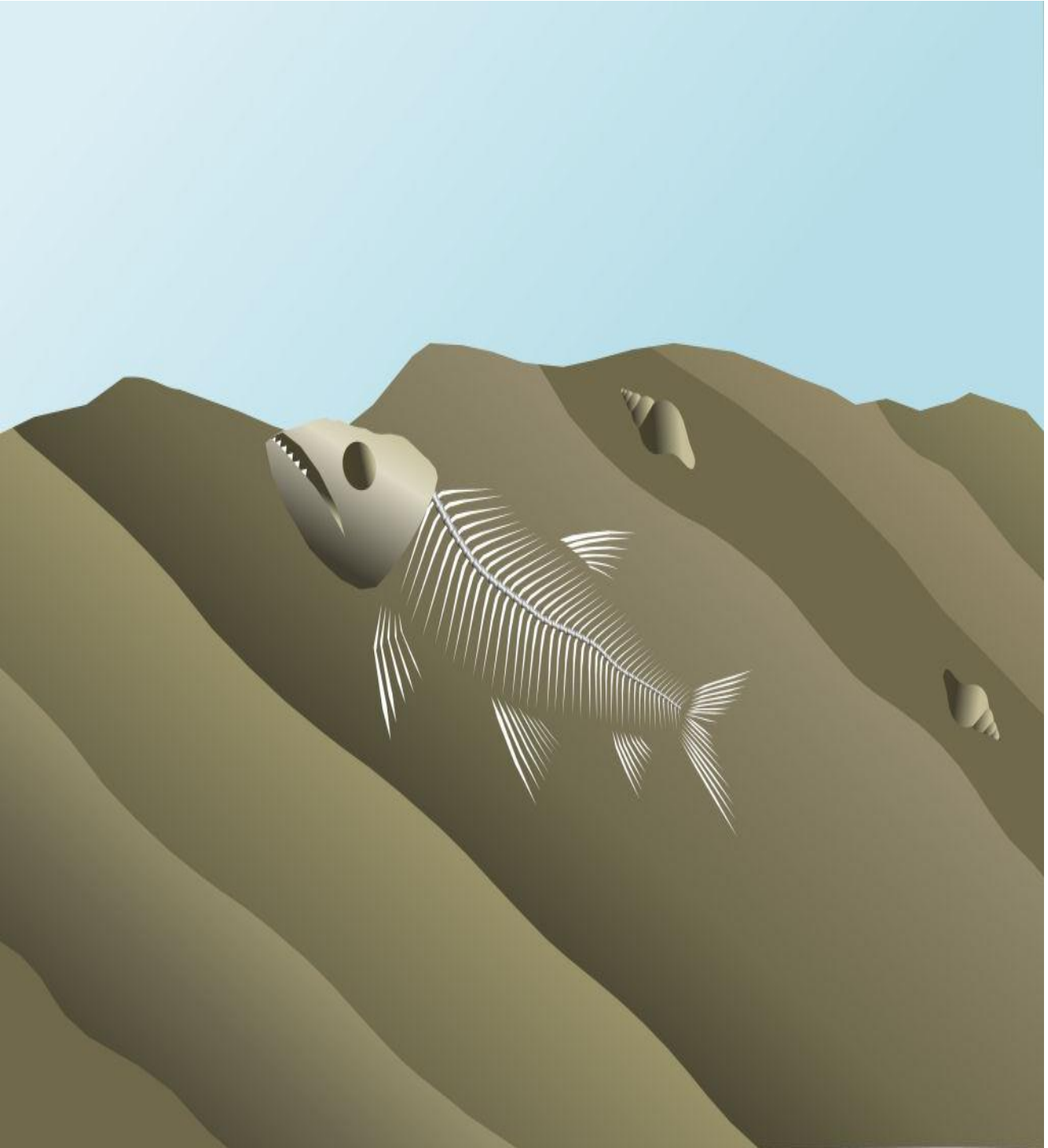
Permineralization

Over time, accumulating sediment continues to bury the skeleton deeper and deeper, forming an internal cast around the skeleton.



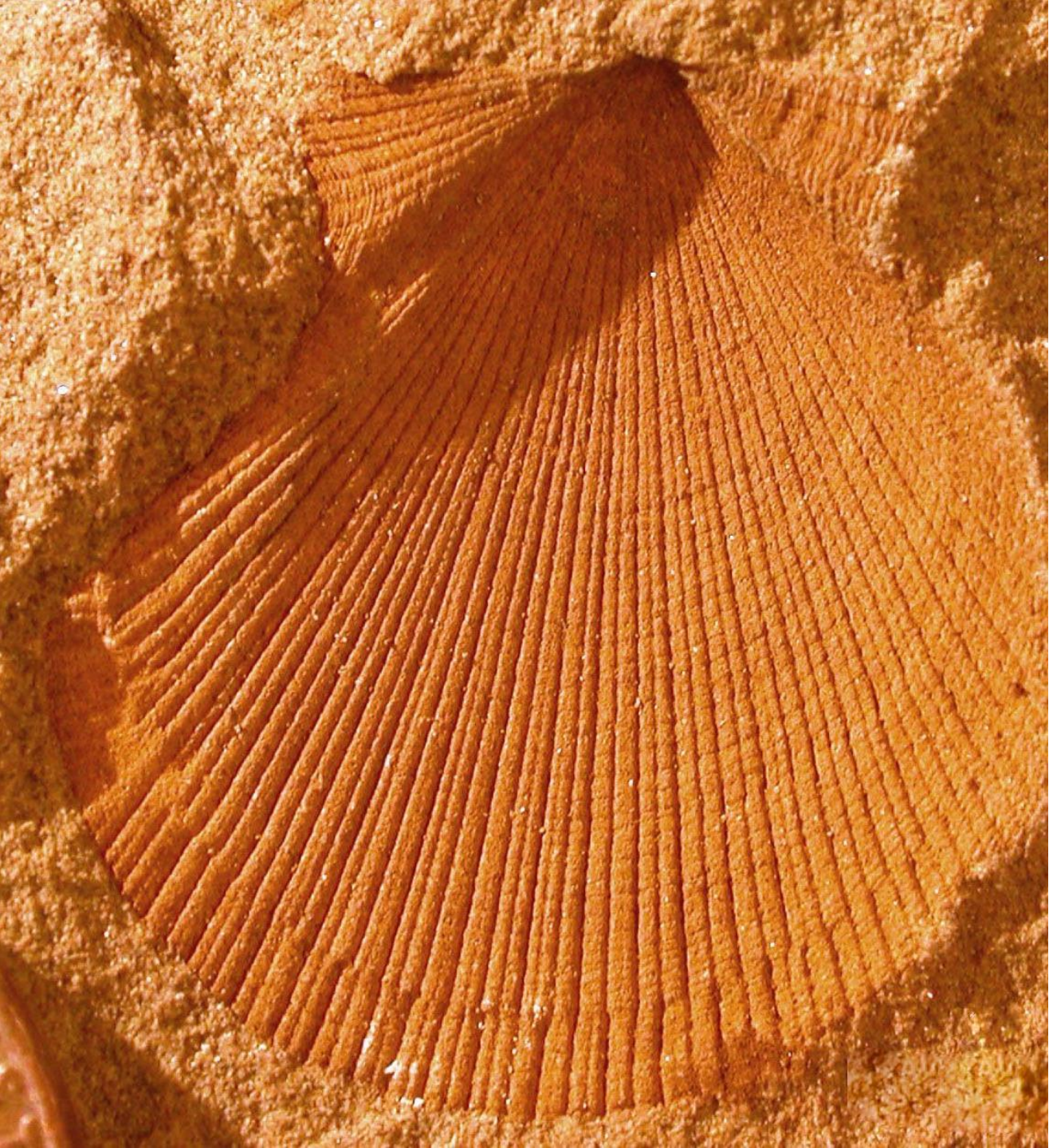
Uplift

Tectonic forces between continental plates uplift the bedrock, raising the fossil above sea level, thus exposing it to erosion.



Exposure

Slowly, the exposed rock is eroded until a small part of the fossil is exposed and visible on the surface, creating an opportunity for extraction.



Mold Fossil

The imprint made by the object that surrounded it

Cast Fossil

Replicas of the object that are formed from external or internal molds

Body Fossil

The actual remains of an organism

Trace Fossil

Tracks, trails, or burrows

True Form Fossil

The entire body of an organism that did not decay over the years.